

Newark Coalition for Low Income Housing

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September 18, 2009

Ainars Rodins, Director
Special Applications Center (SAC)
Department of Housing and Urban Development
77 West Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, IL 60604-3507

Re: Request to delay decision regarding application by Newark (NJ) Housing Authority for partial demolition of Hyatt Court [SAC file number DDA0003534]

Dear Director Rodins:

The Newark Coalition for Low-Income Housing has been involved with public housing in the city of Newark, NJ, for more than 20 years. A longstanding, successful lawsuit commenced by the Coalition in the early 1990s to insure one-for-one replacement of public housing units slated for demolition was recently concluded, with more than 1700 replacement units produced as a result.

The Coalition is very concerned about the current round of demolitions being advanced by the Newark Housing Authority. Approval for the demolition of more than 500 apartments at Baxter Terrace has already been granted by HUD. We are aware that you are now in the final stages of review with regard to the proposed partial demolition of the Hyatt Court complex. This application involves 5 buildings containing more than 130 dwelling units.

We have serious concerns regarding this application. There appear to be substantial issues with regard to the whether or not the requirements contained in the applicable regulations have been met, since the buildings in question were perceived by many as among the better ones in the complex. Although it is very late in the process, Hyatt Court tenants, Coalition members and other advocates will be meeting on Thursday, September 24, 2009, to finalize their position with regard to the Hyatt demolition proposal.

The Coalition is aware that your decision concerning the Hyatt application is imminent. We hereby request that you delay that decision until after the tenants and advocates meet. Should they decide to contest the demolitions, that decision, along with some of the information and documents supporting it,

<https://mail.oel.state.nj.us/frame.html?&rtfPossible=true&security=false&lang=en&charse...> 9/18/2009

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will be transmitted to you electronically by the following Monday, September 28th.

Thank you for considering this request. We again apologize for making it at such a late date. But we believe the issue is critically important. More than 5,000 people stood in line just for the opportunity to have their names placed on the waiting list when the latter was briefly opened on June 8th of this year. The faces of the people in that line spoke volumes about the need to preserve and increase the supply of public and other subsidized housing in Newark, and to allow demolition only when there is no possible alternative.

Sincerely,

David H. Weiner, Secretary